Judge Denies Bid to Commit Ex-General

By Leslie Cheek
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A petition to have a retired Army brigadier general committed to a mental hospital for observation was dismissed yesterday after a hearing in an Arlington judge's chambers.

Dr. Gerhard Cotts, an Arlington psychiatrist, concluded no evidence was offered to show that Brig. Gen. Herbert C. Holdridge was dangerous to himself or to society.

Holdridge, 73, has said he is the "administrator" of the Constitutional Provisional Government of the United States, an organization he founded recently to sponsor what he calls "a program under our Constitution as an alternative to fascism or communism."

The commitment petition was filed by his wife, who claimed that she had been contacted by agents of the Secret Service who urged her to have her husband committed.

The Secret Service and the FBI confirmed yesterday that "we are aware of this man and his activities," but refused any other comment.

Mrs. Holdridge, who has been separated from her husband for more than a year, told Arlington County Court Judge L. Jackson Embrey that her husband "is suffering from delusions of grandeur and a persecution complex."

Mrs. Holdridge said that two months after their marriage in 1950, her husband "told me we had to leave California because it was going to sink into the ground . . . We went to Mexico."

She said, "His desire to be President" resulted in his "running for any office available on any ticket." She said he published "vitriolic literature" against Presidents Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy, and that he maintained the current Government was "illegal."

Holdridge testified that in his books and political campaigns, "I've tried to tell the truth about the groups that are undermining our Constitution. There is the political arm of the Vatican — it's known that there is such a political group, and I think they control the press."

Holdridge said he is a West Point graduate who joined the Cavalry in 1918 and later became a history instructor at the U.S. Military Academy. He said he had been given a medical discharge from the Army in 1944 after a doctor found he was suffering from "psychoneurosis."